

AMENDMENTS

In the Claims

Claims 1-27 were pending at the time of the Office Action.

5 Claims 1, 3, 6-10, 14-18, 20-24, 26 and 27 are rejected.

Claims 11-13 and 25 are expressly allowed.

Claims 2, 4, 5 and 19 are objected to.

Please cancel claims 1, 3, 6-10, 16-18, 20-24 and 26-27 without prejudice.

10 Please amend claims 2, 4, 5 and 19 as indicated below.

Accordingly, claims 2, 4, 5, 11-15, 19 and 25 remain pending and are provided herein below in a complete listing of claims:

Listing of Claims:

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1. (Canceled)

2. (Currently amended) A media holddown device comprising:
a platen;

20 a plurality of vacuum chambers for applying a negative pressure to a
media positioned on the platen;

a vacuum source in permanent air communication with holes in the
platen through the vacuum chambers;

25 a hollow vacuum conduit connected to the vacuum chambers;
wherein the vacuum source is connected to the hollow vacuum conduit,
the vacuum chambers are part of a first component, the hollow vacuum conduit
is part of a second, separate component, and A device according to claim 27,

wherein the first component is of a different material from the second component.

3. (Canceled)

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4. (Currently amended) A media holddown device comprising:

a platen;

a plurality of vacuum chambers for applying a negative pressure to a media positioned on the platen;

10 a vacuum source in permanent air communication with holes in the platen through the vacuum chambers;

a hollow vacuum conduit connected to the vacuum chambers;

15 wherein the vacuum source is connected to the hollow vacuum conduit, the vacuum chambers are part of a first component, the hollow vacuum conduit is part of a second, separate component, and A device according to claim 27,
wherein the first component is of plastics material and the second component is of sheet metal.

5. (Currently amended) A media holddown device comprising:

20 a platen;

a plurality of vacuum chambers for applying a negative pressure to a media positioned on the platen;

a vacuum source in permanent air communication with holes in the platen through the vacuum chambers;

25 a hollow vacuum conduit connected to the vacuum chambers;

wherein the vacuum source is connected to the hollow vacuum conduit, the vacuum chambers are part of a first component, the hollow vacuum conduit

is part of a second, separate component, and A device according to claim 27,
 wherein the first component comprises a plurality of sub components arranged
 along a single second component.

- 5 6. (Canceled)
- 7. (Canceled)
- 8. (Canceled)
- 9. (Canceled)
- 10. (Canceled)

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11. (Previously presented) A media holddown device comprising:
 a platen; and

a plurality of vacuum chambers for applying a negative pressure to a
 media configured to advance across the platen and for maintaining permanent
 15 air communication between holes in the platen and a vacuum source, wherein
 for at least part of the length of the platen, said vacuum chambers are arranged
 one behind the other in the direction of media advance and are connected to the
 vacuum source through a hollow vacuum conduit.

20 12. (Previously presented) A device according to claim 11, wherein the
 vacuum chambers are arranged in rows perpendicular to the direction of media
 advance.

25 13. (Previously presented) A device according to claim 12, wherein each
 vacuum chamber has one or more openings communicating with the hollow
 vacuum conduit and the number, size and/or pattern of arrangement of the
 vacuum chamber openings differ between rows of the vacuum chambers.

14. (Previously presented) A media holddown device comprising:
a platen; and
a plurality of vacuum chambers for applying a negative pressure to a
5 media positioned on the platen with respective walls separating adjacent pairs
of vacuum chambers along the platen, the vacuum chambers having a plurality
of openings providing permanent air communication between holes in the
platen and a vacuum source, and the vacuum chambers being connected via
10 respective paths and through a hollow vacuum conduit to the vacuum source
that is capable of applying a negative pressure p , wherein said walls are
positioned so that, for substantially all widths of media extending from one end
of the platen towards the other, the lowest negative pressure applied to the
media does not fall below q , where q is smaller than P .
- 15 15. (Previously presented) A device according to claim 14, wherein for
selected widths of media a lowest negative pressure applied to the media does
not fall below r , where r lies between q and p .
16. (Canceled)
- 20 17. (Canceled)
18. (Canceled)
19. (Currently amended) A method of determining where to locate
chamber-separating dividing walls between vacuum chambers of a media
25 holddown device, said method comprising:
arranging the vacuum chambers and the dividing walls along a platen in
a manner to substantially ensure that a sufficient negative pressure is

substantially always applied by a vacuum source to a media positioned on the platen whatever the width of the media;

arranging the dividing walls at a location or adjacent where the negative pressure would otherwise drop below a predetermined value q for a media

5 having a corresponding width;

providing a plurality of openings in the vacuum chambers to maintain a permanent air communication between the platen and the vacuum source;

configuring a component that forms the vacuum chambers, the configuring including integrating a plurality of sub-components having end
10 walls extending along the platen;

~~A method according to claim 18, wherein each sub-component has an end connection region separated from a remaining portion of the sub-component by an end region dividing wall.~~

15 20. (Canceled)

21. (Canceled)

22. (Canceled)

23. (Canceled)

24. (Canceled)

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25. (Previously presented) A hard copy apparatus comprising:

a media holddown device including a platen and a plurality of vacuum chambers for applying a negative pressure to a media advancing across the platen, the vacuum chambers having a plurality of openings arranged to
25 provide permanent air communication between the platen and a vacuum source, wherein for at least part of the length of the platen, said vacuum

chambers are arranged one behind the other in the direction of media advance and are connected to the vacuum source through a hollow vacuum conduit.

26. (Canceled)

5 27. (Canceled)